Rashi on Amos
רש"י על עמוס
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Rashi on Amos

Chapter 1

Verse 1

who was among the herdsmen Heb. בַּנֹּקְדִים. Jonathan renders: who was an owner of livestock. Cf. (II Kings 3:4) "Now Mesha the king of Moab was an owner of livestock (נֹקֵד)."
two years before the earthquake —Two years before Uzziah was plagued, the day Isaiah prophesied, as it is stated: (Isaiah 6: 4) "And the doorposts quaked," and it is stated: (Zechariah 14:5) "As you fled before the earthquake."

Verse 2

shall roar from Zion —From the Holy of Holies the speech emanates.
and the dwellings of the shepherds shall be cut off — Jonathan renders: And the dwellings of the kings shall become desolate, and the strength of their walled cities shall be destroyed.

Verse 3

For three transgressions of etc. —As it is stated (Job 33:29) "Lo, all these things does God work, twice, yea, thrice, with a man." But He does not forgive more (according to Shem Ephraim). And here, it is as follows: I have already behaved toward them according to My standard, to forgive them for three transgressions, and if there are more, surely the smaller number is included in the larger amount.
yea for four I will not return them —For the fourth transgression, I need no longer return him empty- handed from taking his recompense from Me, and surely since there are many transgressions in their hands; now I will visit upon them the retribution for threshing the inhabitants of Gilead, their neighbors.
with sledges of iron — Jonathan renders: morigin of iron. Now that is a sort of file called 'lime,' which is made with numerous grooves, and with which they chastise people with tortures, and with them they cut the stubble of the grain to make straw.

Verse 4

Hazael etc. Ben Hadad —The kings of Aram, and the head of Aram is Damascus.

Verse 5

from Bik'ath-Aven —That is a place in Aram.

and one who holds the scepter —[Jonathan renders:] and one who exercises sovereignty. Cf. (Gen. 49:10) “The scepter shall not turn away from Judah,” since the ruler castigates the people with sticks.
from Beth-Eden —A place name.
to Kir —A place name, where Sennacherib exiled them during the time of Ahaz, as it is stated: “And he went up to Damascus and seized it, and exiled Aram to Kir.” [see II Kings 16:9, where the wording differs.] All the retribution that the prophets of Israel prophesied concerning the nations - the prophets who preceded Sennacherib, e.g. Isaiah and Amos, prophesied concerning the sword of Sennacherib, and Jeremiah and Ezekiel prophesied concerning the sword of Nebuchadnezzar.

Verse 6

Gaza —That was a city of the Philistines.
a whole captivity —I.e, the captivity of Israel, that the captivity be complete, that no one should escape, for they would stand on the roads and seize those fleeing and deliver them. And so did the people of Tyre, and so to the four sides during the destruction of the Second Temple, as is delineated in the Aggadah of Ha’azinu (Sifre 322), Gaza from the south, Tyre from the north, Damascus from the east, the Arabs from the west, as it is stated: (Isaiah 21: 13) “The harsh prophecy concerning Arabia: In the forest in Arabia did you lodge, on the roads of your cousins.”

Verse 7

Verse 8

Ashdod... Ashkelon... Ekron —They were the lords of the Philistines.
and I will return My hand —I will smite them repeatedly.

Verse 9

and did not remember the brotherly covenant —which existed between Hiram and Solomon, as it is said: (I Kings 5:26) “And they both made a league together.” And they called each other brothers, as it is said: (ibid. 9:13) “And he said: ‘What are these cities that you have given me, my brother?’”

Verse 10

Verse 11

for pursuing their brother with a sword —As it is said: (Num. 20:18) “Lest I go forth against you with the sword.” And he still clings to his anger, keeps his wrath, and has not retracted it.
and grasped forever their anger —He clung to it and did not let it go.

Verse 12

the palaces of Bozrah —It is between Moab and Edom, and it belonged to the land of Moab, but it was attracted to Edom. And it set up a king for them when the first king died, and it is said: (Gen. 36: 33) “Jobab the son of Zerah from Bozrah.” [from Gen. Rabbah 83:3]

Verse 13

they ripped up the pregnant woman of Gilead —They destroyed it and also ripped up their pregnant women so that no heir would remain who would contest the inheritance. And so does Scripture state: (Jer. 49:1) "Concerning the children of Ammon. So said the Lord: Has Israel no sons? Has he no heir? Why has Malcam taken possession of Gad?"

Chapter 2

Verse 1

For he burnt the bones etc. —Once the king of Edom fell into the hands of the king of Moab, and they burned his bones and plastered them on the walls of the house, and the Holy One, blessed be He, requited the injustice inflicted upon the king, for they treated him with disgrace.

Verse 2

Kerioth —A place name, as it is stated: (Jer. 48:24) "And to Kerioth and to Bozrah."
amidst the tumult —The sound of the stirring of battle.

Verse 3

Verse 4

Verse 5

Verse 6

for selling an innocent man for money —The judges would sell the one who was innocent according to the law, with money; i.e, with the bribes they would receive from his opponent.
and a poor man in order to lock [the fields] Heb. נַעֲלֵיהֶם. Jonathan renders in two places [here and below 8:6]: in order to inherit. And I say that this is its explanation. They pervert the judgment of the poor man so that he will be compelled to sell his field that he had between the fields of the judges, and this one seeks an opportunity and takes it for a cheap price in order to fence in and lock all his fields together, and it should not intervene between them.

Verse 7

Who aspire on the dust of the earth —On the dust of the earth, when they walk on it, all their aspiration and all their thoughts are concerning the head of the poor, how they will rob them and take their property. שֹׁאֲפִים is goloser in O.F., aspiring.
and they pervert the way of the humble etc. —The weak turn away from their way and go on a tortuous way because of fear of them, as Scripture says: (Job 24:4) "They turn the poor from the way."
to the maid —I.e, a betrothed maid.

Verse 8

And they recline on pledged garments — Jonathan renders: On couches of a pledge they dine. They settle [the charge as] a loan upon the poor. and they take a pledge from them, and make their garments into couches and recline on them at the time of their meal.
they recline —An expression of dining, for all their meals were eaten while leaning, for he would lean on his left side.
and the wine of the fined ones —from whom they would exact money for fines and drink wine with it.
in the house of their god —In the house of the idol that they had beside the altar.

Verse 9

as oaks Heb. אַלוֹנִים, kesnes (chenes) in French.
his fruit from above —I.e, the celestial princes. [from Midrash Tanchuma, Devarim 4; Tanchuma Buber, Addendum to Devarim 8]
and his roots from below —I. e, the earthly princes. Another explanation: the wasp would blind their eyes from above and castrate them from below. [from Sotah 36a]

Verse 10

Verse 11

as Nazirites — Jonathan renders: as teachers. For they were separated from the ways of the people of the land and were engaged in the Torah. The expression נְזִירָה is everywhere only an expression of separation.
Is this not so? —This is a rhetorical question. I.e, can you deny this?

Verse 12

And you gave the Nazirites to drink wine —lest they instruct you, for a drunken man is forbidden to instruct. And you gave the Nazirites to drink wine — Jonathan renders: And you misled your teachers with wine.
"Do not prophesy." —Amaziah the priest of Bethel commanded Amos in this manner: (Amos 7:12) "Seer, go, flee to the land of Judah."

Verse 13

Behold I will oppress Heb. מֵעִיק, the Aramaic translation of מֵצִיק,
your dwelling place Heb. תַּחְתֵּיכֶם. Your camping place
as a wagon... is oppressed from the weight of the burden that is upon it.

Verse 14

Verse 15

and the fleet-footed shall not deliver —himself.

Verse 16

shall flee naked —Naked without weapons.

Chapter 3

Verse 1

Verse 2

Only you did I love Heb. יָדַעְתִּי, lit., I knew. I loved you, but you rebelled against Me; therefore,... But our Sages expounded on it in a different manner in Tractate Avodah Zarah (4a).

Verse 3

Will two walk together —Concerning what you say to the prophets, "Do not prophesy," do the prophets prophesy from their own mind unless they were commanded? Are things done in any way but in their customary fashion?
unless they agree —Unless they made an appointment to go together to such and such a place.

Verse 4

Will a lion roar in the forest if he has no prey —When a lion lays hold of its prey, it customarily roars, and it does not roar unless it has taken [prey]. Similarly, Scripture states: (Isa. 5:29) "He will roar like the lion cubs, and he will growl and lay hold of prey." Similarly, (ibid. 31:4) "As a lion or a young lion growls over his prey."

Verse 5

Will a bird fall on a net upon the ground unless it has a snare —in the net which has fallen upon it?
Will a net ascend from the ground —from the place it was laid unless a bird was caught in it? When it wishes to escape, it pulls up the net and lifts it from its place a little, and at that time it is caught.

Verse 6

Will a shophar be sounded —For the lookout sees troops approaching the city and sounds the shophar to warn the people. These are but words of allegory and similitude, [to be explained as follows:]
[4] Will a lion roar —That is Nebuchadnezzar. Another explanation: The prophets compare the holy spirit that comes upon them from the roar of a lion, as he states below: (verse 8) "A lion has roared; who will not fear?" And here he explains the allegory. Did the Holy One, blessed be He, bring the holy spirit into the mouths of the prophets to [prophesy] evil unless retribution was decreed by Him? That is the prey. Will the Holy One, blessed be He, let out a cry to speak harshly unless He has taken you with the snare of iniquity? Will a bird fall on a net that the net will not snare it? I.e, is it possible that you commit sins and it will not be a snare to you? Will a net ascend etc.? Similarly, will your iniquities ascend on high and not take you? Will a shophar be sounded in the city?... So should you quake before the words of the prophets who look out for you to deliver you from the evil, that it not come, and when the evil comes to you, should you not know that the Holy One, blessed be He, does it to you because you did not take heed of His prophets?

Verse 7

For the Lord God does nothing unless He has revealed His secret —That secret to His servants, the prophets.

Verse 8

A lion has roared; who will not fear? —So has the Holy One, blessed be He, spoken to the prophets to prophesy. Who will not prophesy?

Verse 9

Announce —You Philistines and Egyptians, announce this and say in your palaces that they gather on the mountains of Samaria, to see from atop the mountains into the midst of the city, their evil way.

Verse 10

right Heb. נְכֹחָה, meaning 'straight.'
violence and plunder —I.e, money of plunder.

Verse 11

An adversary, even round about the land —The adversary is prepared to come, and he will come around this land.

Verse 12

As the shepherd saves —I.e, he saves little.
the cartilage of an ear Heb. בְּדֶל. [from Jonathan]
so will the children of Israel... be saved I.e, very few people.
in the corner of a bed or in the corner of a couch Heb. בְּפְאַת מִטָּה וּבְדִמֶּשֶׂק עֶרֶשׂ. Jonathan renders: with the strength of rule and trusting in Damascus. I say that the interpretation of the Targum is as follows: Since, in the days of Jehoahaz son of Jehu it is written. (II Kings 13:7) "For the king of Aram had destroyed them," and Jeroboam his grandson saved them partially, as it is said. (ibid. 14:27) "And the Lord did not speak to eradicate the name of Israel from under the heavens, and He saved them through Jeroboam the son of Joash." (ibid. verse 25) "He restored the boundary of Israel." And that is the meaning of 'in the corner of a bed.' The corner of a house is the strongest part of the house. Therefore, he translates. 'with the strength of rule' of Jeroboam, and Amos prophesied in the days of Jeroboam. He further prophesied that they would eventually rely on the kings of Aram, and so they did in the days of Pekah son of Remaliah. This is the meaning of וּבְדִמֶּשֶׂק עֶרֶשׂ, and their couch will be Damascus. Their rest and trust will be on Damascus. And our Sages said in Seder Olam (ch. 22) Rabbi Nehorai said in the name of Rabbi Joshua: These are the ten tribes, which relied on Hezekiah, and on Judah, and escaped with them.
in the corner of a bed —This teaches us that only one eighth of them was left. And the rest of the couch -where was it? In Damascus, to fulfill what is stated: (below 5:27) "And I will exile you beyond Damascus." And I heard in the name of Rabbi Menahem of blessed memory, that he explained. This is one eighth, since it is not stated. "the corner of;" but "in the corner of a bed," in part of it, in one of the two ends of a corner. That is an eighth of the bed, for it has four corners, and two ends of each corner. [This is Rabbi Menahem's explanation of Seder Olam ch. 22. This is probably Rabbi Menahem ben Helbo, the author of Pithronim.] Another explanation I found in the words of Rabbi Meir of blessed memory, as follows: In the corner of a bed —Because of the sin of Ahaziah son of Ahab, who sent to inquire "of Baal-zebub, the god of

Ekron, whether I will recover from this illness” (I Kings 1:2). and in Damascus is the couch —Ben-hadad, king of Aram, sent to inquire of the God of Israel (ibid. ch. 8).

Verse 13

Verse 14

Verse 15

the winter house with the summer house —Since they were delicate, the wealthy people would build for themselves two houses, one for the winter and one for the summer.
ivory houses —Which are paneled with ivory. [from Jonathan]

Chapter 4

Verse 1

cows of Bashan —This refers to the wives of the princes and the officers. Jonathan renders: wealthy in property.

Verse 2

and you shall be borne on shields Heb. בְּצִנּוֹת. And the nations shall bear you on their shields.
and your posterity in fishing boats Heb. בְּסִירוֹת דּוּגָה. [Jonathan renders:] And your daughters in fishermen’s boats. That is a small boat used by fishermen, and, since it is small, he calls it סִיר, a pot, and in Mishnaic Hebrew, it is called דּוּגִית in Baba Bathra 73a. your posterity Heb. וְאַחֲרִיתְכֶן, lit., your end. Dunash ben Livrat (Teshuvoth p. 50): We find a person’s descendants called ‘his end.’ Cf. (Daniel 11:4) “And when he stands up, his kingdom shall be broken, and it shall be divided to the four winds of the heaven, and not to his posterity (לְאַחֲרִיתוֹ).” I.e, he will not leave over his kingdom to his son.

Verse 3

And [through the] breaches they shall emerge, each woman straight before her —And in the breaches of the wall they shall emerge there to flee.
each woman straight before her —In the breach that she will find straight before her. Cf. (Josh. 6:5) “And the people shall go up, every man opposite him (נֶגְדּוֹ),” for there will be many breaches, and they will not find it necessary to search for entrances.
and you shall cast off the haughtiness Heb. הַהַרְמוֹנָה. And you shall cast off yourselves the haughtiness and the authority that you took. This is an Aramaism in the Talmud: (Baba Mezia 84) “הַרְמָנָה דְּמַלְכָּא, It is the king’s command.” And Jonathan renders: “And they shall exile you beyond the טוּרֵי עַרְמִינֵי”. They are the mountains of darkness, an expression of destruction (חֻרְבָּן) and waste.

Verse 4

Come to Bethel etc. —Like a man who says to a scoundrel, "Do [as you please] until your measure [of sin] is full."
and bring your sacrifices in the morning —The priests of Baal say to them, "Idolatry is liberal and does not impose stringent regulations upon you. The Torah states: (Exodus 34:25) 'Shall not stay overnight,' but for idolatry, 'And bring in the morning. ' The Torah states concerning sacrifices of lesser sanctity: (Lev. 19:6) 'On the day of your sacrifice, it may be eaten, and on the morrow, ' but idolatry, 'after three days your tithes of cattle.' The Torah states: (Lev. 2: 11) 'Leaven... you shall not offer up,' but idolatry, (verse 5) 'And offer up a thanksgiving offering of leaven. ' The Torah states: (Deut. 23:22) 'You shall not delay its payment,' but idolatry, 'and proclaim and publish the free will offerings.' Proclaim: 'Whoever vowed and forgot, shall give it thought and remember.'" (Yerushalemi, Avodah Zarah 1:1) And Jonathan renders: And offer up from robbery. Cf. (Isa. 1: 17) "Strengthen the robbed (עָחוּץ);" (Psalms 71:4) "From the hand of the unrighteous and the robbers (וּמְעַוֵּת)."

Verse 5

and proclaim and publish the freewill offerings —with a song, and say that this sacrifice is desirable and acceptable as a freewill offering. So did Jonathan render.

Verse 6

Cleanness of teeth Heb. נִקְיוֹן שִׁנַּיִם. Setting your teeth on edge. [I.e, they would have nothing to eat, and their teeth would be set on edge.] Another explanation: cleanness of teeth. This denotes the lack of meat, which goes between the teeth, as it is stated: (Num. 11:33) "The meat was still between their teeth."

Verse 7

when there were yet three months before the harvest —Until the harvest. I.e, three months before the harvest.
field Heb. חֶלְקָה, a fielded plain, campagne in French.
shall receive rain Heb. תִּמָּטֵר, shall be a place of rain. The master stated: Both of them are for a curse; this one will rot, and this one will wither. [from Taanith 6b]
and the field upon which no rain shall fall —That will not show itself rained upon.

Verse 8

Verse 9

the increase of your gardens —That you are engaged in increasing your gardens.
the shearing locust has devoured Heb. יֹאכַל, lit., shall devour. Has devoured.

Verse 10

after the manner of Egypt —Just as I sent upon you in the desert when you left Egypt.
with the captivity of your horses —For they slay the horses as well.

and I caused the stench of your camps to rise —The smell of your corpses would raise a stench, and I caused it to rise into your nostrils.

Verse 11

like a brand Heb. כְּאוּד, tison in French, an ember; i.e, black and dark and burnt black.

Verse 12

Therefore —Since you did not return to Me.
because I will do this to you —as all these evils.
because —Since you hear from the mouth of My prophets that I will do this to you.
prepare to meet Me —to repent of your wickedness.

Verse 13

what his speech is —All his deeds are related in detail before him at the time of his death.
He makes dawn —for the righteous like a bright light.
darkness —He turns the brightness of the wicked into darkness. Cf. (Isa. 8:22) "And behold, distress and darkness, darkness (מָעוּף) of oppression." Similarly, (Job 10:22) "Land of darkness (עֵפָתָה)"; (ibid. 11:17) "Darkness (תָּעֵפָה) shall be like morning." Your darkness shall shine like the morning.
and treads upon the high places of the earth —He humbles the high and haughty.

Chapter 5

Verse 1

Verse 2

The virgin of Israel —When they are exiled in the days of Hoshea son of Elah (II Kings 17:1-6), a king will never again rise from the ten tribes.
she is spread out on her soil Heb. נִטְּשָׁה. Anything that is cast, lying, and spread out upon the field is called נְטִישָׁה.

Verse 3

that gives forth a thousand Heb. הַיּוֹצֵאת, that gives forth a thousand men.

Verse 4

Seek Me and live —Perform the pilgrimage to pay your vows in Jerusalem.

Verse 5

But seek not Bethel etc. nor pass Beersheba —Here it does not say, "You shall not come," or "You shall not seek," but, "You shall not pass." This teaches us that there was no idol worship there, but as long as one of the members of the ten tribes would go out to seek and did not yet pass Beersheba, he could still turn to the Temple, to Jerusalem, and once he passed Beersheba, that is the way to the calf in Bethel or to the calf in

Dan. And so Scripture states: (infra 8:14) “As your god, O Dan, lives, and as the way of Beersheba lives.” And you should know [that this is so], for Scripture pronounced decrees of retribution on Gilgal and Bethel, and did not decree upon Beersheba.
for Gilgal shall be exiled —According to its name is its curse. And, similarly, there is a city near Bethel named Beth-aven in the Book of Joshua (7:2).
shall become nought Heb. לְאָוֶן. [Jonathan renders:] לְלָמָא, which is the Aramaic translation of הֶבֶל, vanity, and this is a similarity to (Hosea 12: 12) “If Gilead is nought, it is because they are but futility.”

Verse 6

lest He break out like fire Heb. יְצָלַח. Lest His anger ascend as fire to the house of Joseph.
the house of Joseph —Like לְבֵית יוֹסֵף, to the house of Joseph.

Verse 7

Those who turn justice to wormwood —and they do not remember My conversions, that I turn etc.

Verse 8

and turns darkness into morning —There are some who live now in darkness, for whom I made it light.
and day He darkens as night —There is one for whom the time is favorable as the light of day, and I darken it as the night.
He Who calls the water of the sea — Jonathan renders: He Who said to gather camps as numerous as the water of the sea, and scatter them upon the face of the earth. And our Sages explained it as a reference to the generation of Enosh, when He caused the water of the ocean to inundate them. [from Mid. Psalms 88:2, Gen. Rabbah 23:7]
the Lord is His Name —They should have worshipped Him, and He would have given them power over their enemies.

Verse 9

Who strengthens Heb. הַמַּבְלִיג, Who strengthens. Like (Job 10:20) “And I will gain strength (וְאַבְלִיגָה) a little while”; (Jer. 8:18) “Were I to suppress (מַבְלִיגִיתִי) my grief.”
the robbed Heb. וְשֹׁד. A person who was robbed and weak [Jonathan renders:] Who strengthens the weak over the strong, and the robbed He gives rule over strong walled cities.

Verse 10

They hated him who reproves them in the gate —You do not fear Him or His prophets, and you hated those who reprove you in the gates of the courts.

Verse 11

you have trodden Heb. בּוּשַּׁסְכֶם, like בּוֹסַסְכֶם, you have trodden on the poor, that you trample and tread on his head. Like (Jer. 12:10) “They have trampled (בּוֹסְסוּ) My field.”
and the burden of grain you take —The settling of the balance as a loan, that you raised the market price for them immediately to sell them grain with interest, in order to take their estate from them. Therefore, houses and vineyards that you have built and planted on those estates shall not

remain in your hands. and the burden Heb. מַשָּׂאֵת, an expression of מַשָּׂא, a burden, which they make heavy upon them.
precious vineyards Heb. כַּרְמֵי חֶמֶד.

Verse 12

you who oppress the just —[Jonathan renders:] who oppress the innocent.
turning aside... in the gate —In the gates of your courts, they turned aside the judgment of the needy.

Verse 13

the prudent —Whoever is wise shall keep silent when the evil comes, and he shall not criticize the Divine standard of justice, for they did all these.
for it is a time of evil —[I.e.] a time destined [for them] to receive their evil.

Verse 14

and so... shall be etc. —If you do this, the Omnipresent shall be with you as you said in your heart, that you will keep your greatness.

Verse 15

the remnant of Joseph —All Israel are called by his name because he sustained them.

Verse 16

Alas! Alas! Heb. הוֹ הוֹ, an expression of a cry.
and they shall meet the plowman with mourning Heb. וְקָרְאוּ. They shall meet companies of plowmen, plowing in the fields, with the voice of the lamentation of the mourners crying in the streets.
and lamentation with those who know to wail —[Jonathan renders:] And the one who makes a lamentation shall meet one who makes a wailing. And this is only a repetitious expression. Cf. (Ps. 9:5) “My right and my cause (מִשְׁפָּטִי וְדִינִי).”

Verse 17

Verse 18

Woe to those who desire etc. —“Those who say, ‘Let Him hurry; let Him hasten His deed.’” (Isa. 5: 19)
Why would you have etc. —There is a parable concerning a rooster and a bat that were awaiting the dawn, as appears in the chapter entitled “ Chelek.”

Verse 19

Verse 20

Verse 21

[the sacrifices of] your assemblies —[Jonathan renders:] The sacrifice of your assemblies; i.e, when you call an assembly.

Verse 22

and the peace offerings of your fattened cattle Heb. שֶׁלֶם מְרִיאֵיכֶם, the peace offerings of your fatlings, i.e, fattened cattle.

Verse 23

Take away from Me the din of your songs —that the Levites sing on the platform, since you are robbers and perverters of justice.

Verse 24

And justice shall be revealed like water Heb. וְיִגַּל. And you shall do this, and I will accept you. The justice that you have hidden and concealed shall be revealed and stream among you like water. [after Jonathan]
and righteousness —shall be revealed like a mighty stream. [after Jonathan]

Verse 25

Did... sacrifices and meal offerings —Is My desire for sacrifices and meal offerings? Is it not so that in the desert I did not speak with your forefathers to offer up sacrifices to Me? I said: (Lev. 1: 2) "Should a man sacrifice," when he wishes to sacrifice. And Scripture states: (Num. 9:2) "And the children of Israel shall make the Passover sacrifice in its time." This tells us that Israel made only that Passover sacrifice. [based on Sifre to Num. 9:2]

Verse 26

And you shall carry Siccuth your king —He returns to the matter of the retribution [mentioned] above. The day of the Lord is darkness for you, and not light, and you shall carry your idols into exile with you. The enemies shall load them on your necks to carry them with you into exile.
Siccuth... Chiun... Kochav —They are names of pagan deities.

Verse 27

And I will exile you beyond Damascus —I.e, you shall not be exiled to your neighbors as heretofore, that you were delivered into the hands of the kings of Aram [In Nach Lublin-Edom, an obvious error] and they did not take you in captivity to a distant place, but to Damascus. From now on, I will deliver you into the hands of Sennacherib, and he shall exile you far away.

Chapter 6

Verse 1

those called the first of the nations —You were called the most praiseworthy of the nations.
and the house of Israel has come to them —They chose the ordinances of the nations and came to be included among them.

Verse 2

Proceed to Calneh and see —Why have you rejected My Torah to cleave to the ordinances of the nations? Go over and see the prominent nations, whether they are better than these kingdoms which are in Samaria and in Jerusalem.
Calneh —Babylon.
Hamath —Antioch.
Gath of the Philistines —The most prominent of their five lords, called Metheg-ammah, ox-goad, since it ruled over all of them, and that was the "mother" of the kingdom.
or is their border greater than your border —So what wrong have you found in Me?

Verse 3

You, who bring yourselves near to the day of evil —You who cause yourselves to move to the day of evil.
and you bring near —You bring yourselves near to dwell in the exile of Esau your brother who robs you, as it is said: (Obadiah 1:10) "From the violence of your brother Jacob." This is the midrash of Rabbi Simon of blessed memory. [Note that this is also found in Lev. Rabbah 5:3.]
Another explanation. You who despise the day of evil —You who despise the prophecy of the days of evil, which the prophets prophesy to them. and you bring near a dwelling of violence —This is as Isaiah states: (5:8) "Woe to those who join a house to a house." You bring near dwelling in their midst one beside the other through violence.

Verse 4

and stretch out on their beds Heb. וּסְרֻחִים. They spread themselves out and stretch themselves out on their beds. Our Sages, however, explained that they would exchange wives with one another and befoul their beds with semen that is not theirs. [from Shabbath 62b]
lambs Heb. כָּרִים Lambs.
out of the stall —The place where the calves are gathered, and in O.F. kopled, a pen.

Verse 5

Who sing according to the tone of the lute —Menahem (Machbereth Menahem p. 145) classifies it with (Lev. 19:10) "And the single grapes (וּפִרְטֹ) of your vineyard," and I approve of his view, for the one who sings with a musical instrument separates the speech individually, everything according to the tone of the instrument, whether to raise [the note] or to lower [it].
they thought their musical instruments were like [those of] David —They thought their musical instruments were like the musical instruments of your servant David, which were meant for the sake of Heaven, but these were for enjoyment.

Verse 6

Who drink from basins of wine Heb. בְּמִזְרְקֵי. Some of our Sages state in Tractate Shabbath (62b) that they would throw their cups to each other, and some explain that this was the name of a vessel that had two mouths, and it was long, and one would drink from here and one from here, it would be cast from this one's mouth to this one's mouth.
and with the first oils —The best of the oils, which is balsamum.

and they feel no pain Heb. וְלֹא נֶחֱלוּ, an expression of illness. concerning the destruction of Joseph —For they heard from the prophet that it was destined to befall them.

Verse 7

and the banquet of the haughty shall pass away Heb. וְסָר מִרְזָח סְרוּחִים. And the banquets of the aggrandized and the haughty shall be abolished. מִרְזָח is an expression of banquets. In Sifre, in the section commencing: (Num. 25:1) "And Israel sojourned in Shittim," I found: And they returned to make מִרְזָחִים for them, and they would invite them, and they would eat.

Verse 8

by Himself —With knowledge and intention.
abhor Heb. מְתָאֵב. Like מְתָעֵב And so did Jonathan render it: I abhor the Temple, the greatness of Jacob. For the Temple is called the pride of their strength, as is stated: (Ezekiel 24:21) "Behold I profane My Sanctuary, the pride of your strength."
the city and the fullness thereof —Jerusalem and its inhabitants.

Verse 9

if... are left —from the pestilence and the sword, in one house, they shall die —for the enemies shall burn the house upon them when they take the city.

Verse 10

And his kinsman and the one who saved him from burning shall carry him — His kinsman and his friend who saved his bones from the fire. In this manner, Jonathan rendered it: And his kinsman shall carry him out of the fire.
and he shall say I.e, the one who takes [the bodies] out of the fire. to [the one] who is in the end of the house —I.e, to his friend who went to search within the house.
"Are there any more with you?" —Is there any living person besides you who escaped among the hidden ones?
and he shall say, "There is none." —There is no living one, only dead. And this one says to him, "Take out the corpses." הָס, Cast out and eliminate everything. For this comes to them because they did not want to mention the Name of the Lord. In this manner, Jonathan rendered it.

Verse 11

into splinters —That it shall be splintered into fine chips.
chips —Larger than splinters. According to its prominence, shall be its destruction. In this manner did Jonathan render: And he shall smite the large kingdom with a mighty blow, and the small kingdom with a weak blow.

Verse 12

Will horses run on the rock —I.e, will they maintain their running when they change the order of the world?
or will one plow —[I.e.] will a man [plow] with oxen on the rock, that you think to pervert the good way and survive and prosper?

Verse 13

over a thing of naught —Over their greatness and their wealth, which is nought, since it will not endure.
horns —Strength and might to gore the poor and needy with the horns.

Verse 14

from the approach to Hamath —which is in the northwestern corner of Eretz Israel.
until the brook of the Arabah —The brook of Egypt, which is in the southwestern corner.

Chapter 7

Verse 1

Thus... showed me —retribution, that He wished to bring locusts.
at the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth [Heb. שֶׂלֶק, an expression of the latter rain (מַלְקוֹשׁ) when the grain shoots up in its stalk.
and behold the latter growth —was growing after the king's mowings —After they mowed the king's grains. Before it would shoot up in its stalk, they would mow it [as] young corn (שֵׂזָת) to feed the cattle, and so did Jonathan render it: [After] the king's young corn (שֵׂזָתָא) was mown. This is a mishnaic expression. (Menachoth 10:8) "One may cut young corn (שֵׂזָת) and feed the cattle."

Verse 2

And it came to pass when it finished Heb. אֵם. When it finished eating.
the grass of the earth —in that field.
and I said, "O Lord God! Forgive now!" —and destroy not the land.
who shall arise [with] Jacob —[Jonathan renders:] Who shall arise and beseech for their sins?
for he is small [Jonathan renders:] For they are wandering.

Verse 3

The Lord relented concerning this —He acquiesced to my prayer and was entreated of me.

Verse 4

showed me —another retribution to bring upon them.
and behold... calls —His household to contend with them by the retribution of the kindling of fire.
the field Heb. חֵוֶלֶק, the parcel of land.

Verse 5

Verse 6

Verse 7

on a wall made by a plumbline —On the wall of justice, and so did Dunash interpret it: אֲנָךְ is an Arabic expression for the plumbline. The lead by which the builder of the walls looks to straighten the row of stones. Here, too, it is an expression of the plumbline of justice. [from Teshuvoth Dunash, p.12]

Verse 8

Behold I place a plumbline —Behold I judge them with the line of strict justice.
pardon them —to wait for them for their transgressions.

Verse 9

and the sanctuaries of Israel —That is Bethel, as it is said: (verse 13) "For it is the sanctuary of a king."
upon the house of Jeroboam —son of Joash.

Verse 10

the priest of Bethel —A priest of the idols.

Verse 11

Jeroboam shall die by the sword —But he did not say that, only, "And I will rise upon the house of Jeroboam," and that refers to his son, Zechariah, who was assassinated by Shallum son of Jabesh (II Kings 15).

Verse 12

"Seer" —You, who prophesy the future.
go, run away to the land of Judah —for there is the sanctuary of the Holy One, blessed be He, in Whose Name you prophesy.
and eat bread there —This is an expression of derision. He said to him, "There they will give you crumbs of bread as pay for what you prophesy."

Verse 13

But do not continue to prophesy in Bethel —for here they mention only the name of the idols.

Verse 14

I am neither a prophet —I am not one of your false prophets, who take pay for prophesying. I do not need all this, and I never behaved in that manner, for I am wealthy and an owner of cattle and property, as Jonathan renders: For I am an owner of cattle and I have sycamores in the plain.
a cattle herder Heb. בּוֹקֵר
and an inspector of sycamores Heb. וּבוֹלֵס. One who searches the sycamores to see which one has reached its time to cut in order to increase the branches, and which one is fit for beams, for so was the custom to cut the virgin sycamores. וּבוֹלֵס is like וּבוֹשֵׂ, a searcher, but Amos was a stammerer, for so they said: Why was he named Amos? Because he was burdened (עָמוּס) by his tongue, and Israel would call him pesilus (Greek for tongue-tied) as it is stated in Pesikta. [from Pesikta de-Rav Kahana p.125]

Verse 15

Verse 16

and do not prophesy [Heb.. וְלֹאתַטִּיף. It is an expression of prophecy, and there are many in Scripture, e.g. (Ezekiel 21:2) "And prophesy (וְהַטֵּף) to the south."

Chapter 8

Verse 1

a basket of late figs Heb. כְּלוּב. A basket full of late figs, which are not good

Verse 2

Verse 3

And the songs of the temple —which they sing within their temples at their banquets.
corpses shall increase —The corpses of the slain shall increase. [from Jonathan]
everywhere "Cast away, remove!" —Everywhere one will say, "Cast away, remove!" Cast away from here, remove these corpses from here. [from Jonathan]

Verse 4

you who swallow up Heb. הַשֹּׁאֲפִים, who swallow up the needy.
and to cut off Heb. וְלַשְׁבִּית, like וּלְהַשְׁבִּית. And examples [of this are found in Isaiah 23:11:] "To destroy (לַשְׁמִד) its strongholds." (II Kings 9:15) "To go and tell (לָגִיד) in Jezreel."

Verse 5

Saying, "When will the month be delayed" —This is the swallowing up. They anticipate the time that the grain will be expensive and will be sold to the poor with interest, and they will take their fields. the month be delayed Heb. יֶעֱבַר. Jonathan renders: When will the year be interpolated and [when] will the month of interpolation come? This is an expression of delay, like (Jer. 46:17) "Has allowed the appointed time to pass by (הֶעֱבִיר)." And because they delay the offering up of the Omer, and the year is extended, and the old grain becomes expensive.
and the Sabbatical Year, so that we will open grain —When will the Sabbatical Year come, and the grain will become expensive, and we will open our storehouses of grain.
to make the ephah smaller To sell for a smaller measure, and our money we will receive with a large shekel.

Verse 6

in order to inherit them Heb. בַּעֲבוּר נַעֲלִים. [from Jonathan]
and the refuse of the corn we will sell —[Jonathan renders:] And the sweepings of the grains we will sell. The refuse that fell from the wheat into the sieve, to sell at high prices to the poor.

Verse 7

Verse 8

Shall the land not quake for this —Is this iniquity not serious enough that the land be destroyed because of it?
Yea, it shall rise up wholly like the rain cloud Heb. כְּאֹר. And in another place (9:5), Scripture says: "And it shall come up wholly like the river (כַּיְאֹר)," and Jonathan renders them both identically: And a king shall rise upon it with his camp as numerous as the waters of the river, and cover it completely. To me, it seems difficult to define כְּאֹר like כַּיְאֹר. It can, however be explained like: (Job 36:32) "On the clouds, the rain (אוֹר) is covered. (Job 37:11)" He scatters his rain cloud (אוֹרוֹ)." And it shall go up wholly like a rain cloud, pitch darkness.
and it shall overflow and sink like the river of Egypt —The Nile overflows once in forty years and waters the land, and when it overflows, it brings up mud and dirt on its banks, and when it returns from watering, it returns over its banks and its water sinks. And that is called sinking, for the dirt that makes the water murky, settles. and it shall cast up Heb. וְנִגְרְשָׁה, Like (Isa. 57:20) "And its waters cast up (וַיִּגְרְשׁוּ) mud and dirt." Also the land will spew out the wicked in its midst, and afterwards it will rest.

Verse 9

I will cause the sun to set at midday —When there will be exceeding tranquility, a sudden downfall will come and our Rabbis said: This refers to the day of Josiah who died by the "peaceful sword" as our Rabbis said: There was no more peaceful sword than Pharaoh-Neco who said to Josiah, (II Chron. 35:21) "What do I have to do with you, O king of Judah; not upon you yourself today." Not upon you do I come today, but to pass through your land "to the house against which I wage war etc." [from Mo'ed Katan, Ta'anith 22a]
the sun —The kingdom of the house of David is compared to the sun, as it is said: (Psalms 89:37) "And his throne is like the sun opposite Me."

Verse 10

And I will turn your festivals into mourning —as the matter is stated: (II Chron 35:24) "And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah."
and all your songs into lamentation —as the matter is stated: (ibid. verse 25) "And all the singing men and singing women spoke in their lamentations."
like the mourning for an only son —Like a father who mourns over an only son.

Verse 11

but to hear —for the holy spirit shall terminate from them.

Verse 12

Verse 13

shall faint Heb. תִּתְעַלַּפְנָה. Their spirit shall fly out. Cf. (Jonah 4:8) "And he fainted (וַיִּתְעַלָּף)." And so, (Ezekiel 31:15) "The trees of the

field fainted (עֻלְפָּה) for him.” And so in the language of the Mishnah (Chullin 3b): “He may faint (נִתְעַלְפָה),” pasmer, (pamer) in French. [from Dunash p.84]

Verse 14

“As your god lives, O Dan,” —One of the calves that Jeroboam erected in Dan.

Chapter 9

Verse 1

standing beside the altar —Going away from the cherub to the altar on its way out, on the golden altar which is in the Temple, and this is one of the ten travels made by the Shechinah. [from Jonathan]
Strike the lintel —which is on top of the roof.
and the sideposts shall quake —The lower doorposts of the Temple; so will the king be slain and the princes quake.
and break to pieces those who are at the head of all of them Heb. וּבְצָעֵם, like וּפְצָעֵם [wound them or break them] And Jonathan renders כַּפְתּוֹר as the Menorah: [If the people of the house of Israel do not repent,] extinguish the Menorah; King Josiah shall be slain. And the sideposts shall quake, meaning that the Temple will be destroyed, and the Courtyards will be demolished.
וּבְצָעֵם בְּרֹאשׁ כֻּלָּם, meaning that the vessels of the Temple will go into captivity. וּבְצָעֵם means ‘their money’ shall go into exile at the head of all of them.

Verse 2

If they dig down into the grave —If they think to hide in Sheol.
My hand shall take them —Their enemies shall take them with My word. - [from Jonathan]
and if they ascend to the heavens —And if they ascend to the lofty mountains up to the heavens, from there they shall bring them down with My word.

Verse 3

at the peak of Carmel —At the top of the towers of the fortifed cities. [from Jonathan]
from there I will search [them out] —From there I will appoint searchers, and they will search them out. [from Jonathan]
in the land of the sea Heb. בְּקַרְקַע הַיָּם. [Jonathan renders:] בְּגִינֵּי יַמָּא, in the islands of the sea.
I will command the serpent — Jonathan renders: peoples as strong as a serpent.

Verse 4

Verse 5

Who touches the land and it quakes —Who rebukes the land and it quakes. וַתָּמוֹג is an expression of motion. And the Lord is He Who touches the land and it quakes. I.e, this decree emanates from Me.

Verse 6

and... His company —The company of His creatures. Another explanation: The company of the righteous was the foundation of the earth and the ceiling [other editions: and the benefit] of the heavens, for whose sake everything exists.
Who calls the water of the sea —Who says to gather camps as numerous as the waters of the sea. [from Jonathan]

Verse 7

Are you not like the children of the Cushites to Me —Why should I refrain from exacting retribution upon you since you do not return to Me? Have you not come from the sons of Noah like the other nations? Like the Cushites whom you resemble, as the matter is stated: (Jer. 13:22) "Will a Cushite change his skin…? So will you be able to improve."
Did I not —Was it not out of My goodness, the beginning of My choosing you, My taking you out of the land of Egypt? Now what is that to Me? The Philistines, too, I took out of Caphtor in such a manner when the Caphtorites came upon the Avvites, as the matter is stated (Deut. 2:23) "And the Avvites who lived in open towns up to Gaza etc." They vanquished also the people of Gaza and the remaining lords of the Philistines under them, and I took them out of their hands, and, even so, I did not make them My people.
and Aram from Kir —And so am I destined to bring Aram up from Kir, where Sennacherib will exile them, and, at the end of days, when the kingdom of Assyria will terminate, they will go out.

Verse 8

and I will destroy it —The kingdom is the house of Jehu, but I will not destroy the house of Jacob.

Verse 9

For behold I command —to exile them among all the nations, an unusually great scattering.
as it is shaken —What they sift with a sieve after the fine bran falls out of it, and there remains the coarse [bran], which cannot come out, and then the one who shakes [it], shakes with all his might.
it is shaken —by another, and it is impossible to read עוֹנֵעַ, since that denotes a thing that moves by itself.

Verse 10

"The evil shall not soon come upon us." —Because of our iniquities, the evil shall not hasten to approach and to come.

Verse 11

On that day —And, after all these will befall him, that day will come, the day destined for the redemption, and thereon... I will raise up the fallen Tabernacle of David — Jonathan renders: the kingdom of the house of David.

Verse 12

In order that they inherit —[I.e, in order that] Israel [inherit] the remnant of Edom etc. because My Name is called upon them Heb. אֲשֶׁר, like יַעַן, because.

Verse 13

that the plowman shall meet the reaper —(Lev. 26:5) “And your threshing shall overtake the vintage, and the vintage shall overtake the sowing.” They will not finish plowing until the harvest comes, and they will not finish harvesting until the time of sowing comes.
shall melt Heb. תִּתְמוֹגַגְנָה. Jonathan renders: shall split. Tilled soil splits when rains come.
sweet wine Heb. עָסִיס. Good and sweet wine.